Damage to crop and soil due to recent flood

†1263. SHRI PRABHAT JHA: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the flood, which ravaged various parts of the country this year, has not only caused heavy damage to Kharif crop, but also decreased the fertility of the soil;

(b) if so, whether any assessment has been made by Government in this regard;

(c) if so, State-wise details of the damage caused to the crops by the flood;

(d) whether Government is considering to provide any help to the farmers to compensate the loss; and

(e) if so, the steps being taken by Government to improve the fertility of the soil?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI KANTILAL BHURIA): (a) to (e) The information is being collected and will be laid on the Table of the House.

Non-fixation of MSP for agricultural products

1264. SHRI M.V. MYSURA REDDY: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government has still not declared the MSP for 14 agricultural products even after the beginning of Kharif season;

(b) if so, the details of agricultural products whose MSP has not been fixed so far;

(c) the reasons for the enormous delay in fixing the MSP for the above products; and

(d) by when, the MSP for the above 14 products is going to be fixed by Government?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI KANTILAL BHURIA): (a) to (d) The Minimum Support Prices of all Kharif Crops of 2008-09 season, comprising of fourteen crops, have already been fixed by the Government in August, 2008.

Problems faced by farmers

1265. SHRI MATILAL SARKAR: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) the status of demand and supply of wheat, pulses and edible oils in the country in the year 2006-07, 2007-08 and 2008-09;

(b) whether it is a fact that Government is showing great interest in importing these items rather than increasing production in the country;

(c) whether it is also a fact that the prime impediments in production is the problem of irrigation and farm loans; and

(d) if so, the steps taken by Government to assist the farmers in these two aspects?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI KANTILAL BHURIA): (a) and (b) On the basis of per capita quantities of consumption reported in National Sample Survey

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi

61st Round (2004-05) report on "Household Consumption of Various Goods and Services in India" and the population projections given by the Registrar General of India, following table gives the status of demand for household consumption and supply (production) of wheat, pulses and oilseeds in the country for the period 2006-07 to 2008-09:

(Million Tonnes)

Year	Wheat		Pulses		Oilseeds	
	Demand for household consumption	Production	Demand for household consumption	Production	Demand for household consumption	Production
2006-07	67.60	75.81	10.86	14.20	25.92	24.29
2007-08	68.59	78.40*	11.02	15.11*	26.32	28.83*
2008-09	69.57	$	11.18	4.72 #	26.71	17.95#

* 4th Advance Estimates released on 09.07.2008

1st Advance Estimates released on 25.09.2008, which pertains to only kharif crops.

$ Wheat is a rabi crop, its sowing is in progress and no estimate is available.

Taking into account the requirement for other uses like processed food, the demand is higher and the demand-supply gap in case of pulses and oilseeds is met through imports. Government has been making all efforts to increase the domestic production and reduce import requirement of these items. For this purpose, a Centrally Sponsored Scheme "National Food Security Mission" (NFSM) has been launched from 2007-08 in the country. It aims at increasing the production of wheat by 8 million tonnes, pulses by 2 million tonnes and rice by 10 million tonnes by the end of the Eleventh Plan, *i.e.*, by 2011-12 through area increase and productivity enhancement in targeted districts of the country. Further, to increase the production of oilseeds and pulses, a centrally sponsored "Integrated Scheme on Oilseeds, Pulses, Oilpalm and Maize" (ISOPOM) is under implementation with effect from 01.04.2004 in 14 major pulses growing States in the country.

(c) and (d) Better facilities for irrigation and farm loan are important factors for increasing farm production. About 60% of our net sown area is rainfed. To improve irrigation facility in the country, creation of 16 million hectares of irrigation potential has been envisaged in the 11th Plan.

To increase the overall credit flow to farm sector, following initiatives have been taken by the Government:

1. Government is implementing a comprehensive credit policy from 2004-05 as a result of which, credit flow increased from Rs. 125309 crore in 2004-05 to Rs. 243570 crore in 2007-08. During 2008-09, the credit flow target is Rs. 280000 crore.
2. Since Kharif 2006-07, farmers are receiving crop loans upto a principal amount of Rs. 3 lakh at a reduced rate of interest of 7%.
3. The scheme of debt waiver and debt relief for farmers announced by the Government in the Union Budget 2008-09 is under implementation.
4. Reserve Bank of India has issued instructions to the banks to provide collateral free loans upto Rs. 50,000.